

Amendments to the Claims:

Please amend claims 3, 5, and 7 as indicated below. This listing of claims will replace all prior version, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1.(withdrawn):A method for providing emergent and flexible workflow management to a first user, the first user communicating with other users, the first user using a first message-based system having embedded information management resources, the first message-based system having a viewer, the method comprising the operations of:

- (a) generating a message at the first message-based system, the message having metadata;
- (b) updating metadata of the message, the metadata including at least one of the group of a deadline, a reminder, a deferral and an obligation, using the embedded information management resources;
- (c) sending the message to the other users;
- (d) displaying some of the metadata of the message on the viewer of the first message-based system; and
- (e) tracking some of the metadata of the message at the first message-based system.

2.(withdrawn):The method of Claim 1 wherein the first user communicates with a second user, the second user using a second message-based system having embedded information management resources, the second message-based system having a viewer, the method further comprising the operations of:

- (f) receiving the message at the second user system;
- (g) generating a reply message having metadata at the second message-based system;

- (h) updating metadata of the reply message, the metadata including at least one of a second deadline and a second obligation, using the embedded information management resources;
- (i) sending the reply message to the first message-based system;
- (j) displaying some of metadata of the reply message on the viewer of the second message-based system; and
- (k) tracking some of the metadata of the reply message at the second message-based system.

3.(currently amended): A system for managing and tracking information items within a first message-based system, the first message-based system being one of a set of message-based systems within a workgroup, the first message-based system having a viewer, the system comprising:

- (a) a thrask generating module generating a plurality of thrasks, each of the thrasks including at least one information item having a set of metadata, the metadata including at least one of the group of a deadline, a reminder, a deferral and an obligation;
- (b) a sorting module sorting a new information item into one of the thrasks in accordance with at least one criterion;
- (c) a display module displaying some one or more of the thrasks and at least one of the metadata of each of the information items in each of the displayed thrasks in the viewer; and
- (d) an updating module updating the thrasks and at least one of the metadata.

4.(original): The method of Claim 3 wherein the first message-based system has different capabilities than some in the set of message-based systems.

5.(currently amended): A method for managing and tracking information items within a first message-based system, the first message-based system being one of a

set of message-based systems within a shared workgroup, the message-based systems being synchronized periodically with a shared workgroup component on a server, the first message-based system having a viewer, the method comprising the operations of:

- (a) generating a plurality of thrasks, each of the thrasks including at least one information item having a set of metadata;
- (b) sorting a new information item into one of the thrasks in accordance with at least one criterion;
- (c) displaying some one or more of the thrasks and at least one of the metadata of one of the information items in one of the displayed thrasks in the viewer; and
- (d) providing a shared view of some of the thrasks to a subset of the message-based systems within the shared workgroup in response to a user selection of an option.

6.(original): The method of Claim 5 further comprising the operation of:

- (e) updating at least one of the metadata of one of the information items in one of the thrasks.

7.(currently amended): A system for managing and tracking information items within a first message-based system, the first message-based system being one of a set of message-based systems within a shared workgroup, the message-based systems being synchronized periodically with a shared workgroup component on a server, the first message-based system having a viewer, the system comprising:

- (a) a thrask generating module generating a plurality of thrasks, each of the thrasks including at least one information item having a set of metadata;
- (b) a sorting module sorting a new information item into one of the thrasks in accordance with at least one criterion;

- (c) a display module displaying some one or more of the thrasks and at least one of the metadata of one of the information items in one of the displayed thrasks in the viewer; and
- (d) a sharing module providing a shared view of some of the thrasks to a subset of the message-based systems within the shared workgroup in response to a user selection of an option.

8.(original): The system of Claim 7 further comprising:

- (e) an updating module updating at least one of the metadata of one of the information items in one of the thrasks.